

INTRODUCTION

About DOT

The United States Department of Transportation (DOT) is the federal steward of the nation's transportation system. Created in 1967, DOT brought under one umbrella a myriad of transportation missions and programs, some of which have been in existence since the 1700s. The Department employs about 100,000 civilian and military people deployed across the country and the world. It includes the:

Office of the Secretary (OST)
Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS)
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA)
Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA)
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
Saint Lawrence Seaway Development Corporation (SLSDC)
Federal Railroad Administration (FRA)
Surface Transportation Board (STB)
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
Transportation Administrative Service Center (TASC)
Maritime Administration (MARAD)
United States Coast Guard (USCG)

These organizations operate collaboratively under a Departmental mission and commitment to create the best possible integrated air, land, sea, and space transportation system for America.

About This Report

This Financial Management (FM) Status Report and Five-Year Plan highlights the many FM achievements, on-going improvements and future plans of the

Department in our “*Quest for the Best*” in FM information, systems, operations, and efficient use of resources. It shows how our FM efforts support the Administration’s National Performance Review, Government-wide FM goals and DOT’s Strategic Plans and FM visions. And, it shows that DOT’s FM community is employing modern technologies, FM best practices, and common sense.

Working with vision and vigilance, we have made good progress since our 1994 FM Strategic Plan was adopted by the CFO, the DOT CFO Council and the FM community. This progress and our future plans are described in the four sections of this report--**Financial Systems, Financial Information, Financial Services and Financial Resources**. We are committed to giving our senior executives and program managers the financial information, services and systems necessary to achieve a high level of performance and accountability.

In the **Financial Systems** area, we are moving to *best of breed* financial systems, not a one size fits all environment. The new systems efforts we have adopted and planned are “front running” our goal to extend financial activities and systems beyond the accounting office directly into program offices. Data will be captured only once--at the source--in an electronic environment that will efficiently support program offices and managers.

Our main emphasis on **Financial Information**, simply stated, is to give our managers and customers quick access to easily understood and accurate data, to help them make the best decisions. We are building on the financial information

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systems we previously purchased or developed to make them easier to use and available to users outside the traditional accounting office. And, for the first time ever, we presented to the American public an audited consolidated financial statement for DOT. To give information to the public, and us, on the results of our transportation programs, we continue to employ performance measures and remain on track in implementing the Government Performance and Results Act.

Financial Services covers activities and processes to enable our employees to do their jobs, and mechanisms to pay fund recipients, e.g., grantees, vendors. Activities such as processing employee travel, buying supplies and services, making salary payments, paying grantees

and others, etc., are all being streamlined, electronically enabled, and otherwise made to work quicker, better and more efficiently.

The current Administration, the Secretary, and others working in the transportation infrastructure area recognize that existing Federal and State dollars are not enough to meet the transportation needs of the 21st Century. So we needed to find ways to leverage these funds, and we did! Through innovative financing, we found techniques that supplemented federal funds with private and non-federal public funds. Some of these techniques are highlighted in the **Financial Resources** section of this report. Read on to learn more about them.